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FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 005497

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/20/2017

TAGS: PREL PTER MNUC PARM IR CH ZK

SUBJECT: PRC PRESIDENT TELLS IRANIAN COUNTERPART TO WORK
WITH INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO RESOLVE NUCLEAR ISSUE

REF: A. BISHKEK 1048

1B. BEIJING 5186

1C. BEIJING 5068

Classified By: (U) Charge d'Affaires, a.i., Dan Piccata for reasons 1.4
(b/d).

Summary

11. (C) Chinese President Hu Jintao told Iranian President Ahmadinejad that Iran should "answer all the concerns of the international community" over its nuclear program. According to MFA Department of West Asian and North African Affairs Director General Song Aiguo, President Hu, in an August 15 bilateral meeting on the margins of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit, noted to his Iranian counterpart China's commitment to a peaceful, negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue and its interest in upholding the international nonproliferation regime. Song told the DCM August 18 that China's view is that as long as all sides stick to peaceful means the Iranian nuclear issue can be easily solved. The DCM responded that China and the United States need to do more to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons and urged China to support a new UN Security Council resolution on Iran and to step up efforts to ensure that Chinese dual-use exports do not reach Iran. End Summary.

Atmospherics

12. (SBU) Almost immediately upon his return from accompanying President Hu to Central Asia, DG Song on August 18 offered the DCM a rare Saturday briefing. Song said that China understands the great concern in Washington over Iran and is eager to inform the United States about the Hu-Ahmadinejad meeting. Song's body language throughout the meeting indicated he thought the USG would be happy to hear Hu's remarks to Ahmadinejad. (Song's remarks on the SCO summit are reported septel.)

Hu: Address International Concerns

13. (C) Song said most of the two-hour bilateral meeting August 15 between Presidents Hu and Ahmadinejad focused on the nuclear issue. Song repeated three times that the key

point of President Hu's remarks was to urge the Iranian side to have a "correct reading" of the current sensitive situation, "to move the situation in the right direction" and "to be flexible and answer all the concerns of the international community." According to Song, Hu acknowledged Iran's right to pursue a peaceful nuclear program and stressed to Ahmadinejad the firm Chinese commitment to a peaceful, negotiated diplomatic solution to the nuclear issue, but pointed out China's interest in upholding the international nonproliferation regime.

Ahmadinejad: Iran Working with IAEA

¶4. (C) According to Song, Ahmadinejad replied that Iran appreciates China's commitment to a peaceful solution, has no plans to develop nuclear weapons and does not seek rights beyond international norms and International Atomic Energy Administration (IAEA) standards. Song said that China regards Iran's cooperation with the IAEA as a crucial factor and Hu urged Ahmadinejad to continue such cooperation. Song concluded that China's view is "as long as all sides stick to peaceful means, the (Iranian nuclear) problem is not difficult to solve." Song noted that inclusion of all parties in discussions is important to a solution and praised the recent meeting between the United States and Iran in Iraq.

DCM: Need to Do More on Iran

¶5. (C) The DCM thanked Song for his readout of the Hu-Ahmadinejad meeting. Iran is a top U.S. foreign policy concern. Iran plays a destabilizing role in the Middle East

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and, if it develops nuclear weapons or advanced missiles, the situation will greatly worsen. Therefore, the United States and China share a joint interest in cooperating to press Iran to address international concerns over its nuclear program. The U.S. view is that there is little hope that the IAEA alone can resolve the international community's concerns. Specifically, the United States would like China's support for another UN Security Council resolution now that the May 24 deadline for Iranian compliance with relevant previous UNSC resolutions has long passed. The United States would appreciate stepped-up PRC efforts to stop dual-use Chinese exports from reaching Iran. In response, Song reiterated China's desire for a peaceful, negotiated solution and said China takes very seriously the issue of weapons exports. Unfortunately, he complained, the United States often seeks to limit exports that have nothing to do with weapons. However, China is ready for more discussions on this issue.

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